

NEWS RELEASE

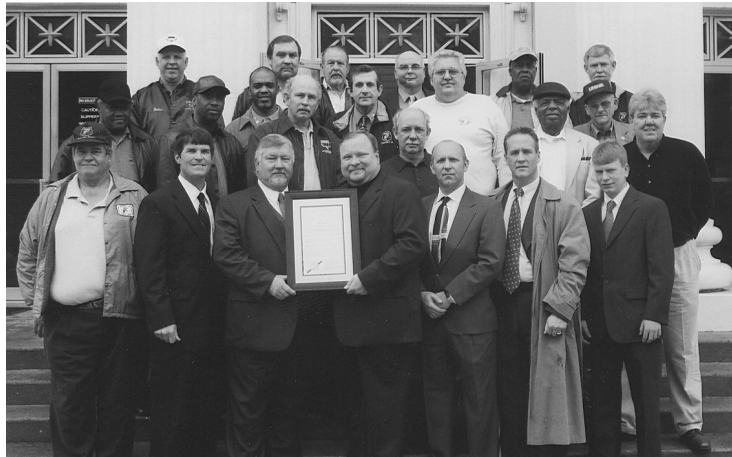


STATE OF ALABAMA
Department of Industrial
Relations
News For Immediate Release
Contact: Debbie Herbert at
334/242-8609

February 14-18 is Mine Safety Awareness Week in Alabama

MONTGOMERY, ALABAMA, February 15, 2005 This week marks Alabama's first mine safety awareness week and is designed to increase mine safety awareness and improve conditions of mines for those in the mining industry, according to Phyllis Kennedy, director of the Alabama Department of Industrial Relations.

This photo may be accessed at: <http://dir.alabama.gov/> under “DIR Press Releases.”



Alabama had its first Mine Safety Awareness Week with a resolution sponsored by Senator Zeb Little. Over 5,000 men and women are employed in Alabama's mining industry which consists of 546 active mines all around the state. Whether they are employed in non-coal production at open pits, quarries, and other surface mines, or mining coal in some of the deepest coal mines in North America, safety is paramount. Beginning with second from left, first row: Michael Skates, DIR, State Mining and Reclamation Division director; Daryl Dewberry, United Mine Workers of America; Sam Denney of the Joseph A. Holmes Safety Association; Richard Gates and Mike Davis of the Mine Safety and Health Administration which provides federal oversight of mine conditions. Others pictured are individuals working in the mining industry.

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Industrial Relations is an umbrella organization of State government which administers: the State Employment Service, Unemployment Insurance, Workers' Compensation, and Labor Market Information. Smaller programs also administered include Abandoned Mine Land Reclamation, Mine Safety and Inspection, and Surface Mining of Non-Fuel Minerals. For more information on DIR visit the Web site: <http://dir.alabama.gov/>